



Iowa Juneteenth Observance

A Program of The Des Moines Urban Experience

“Marking 32 Years of Service to the Iowa Community”



2023 Iowa Juneteenth Observance Essay Contest

Sponsored by Drake University

To: Iowa High School Students, Grades 9 - 11

From: Nakia Ewing
Iowa Juneteenth Observance
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Subject: 2023 Iowa Juneteenth Observance ‘Essay Contest’

Juneteenth is an international observance marking the end to slavery on **June 19, 1865**. Juneteenth will celebrate **158 years of celebration during 2023**. The Iowa Juneteenth Observance will mark its **33rd** anniversary as well. On **April 11, 2002**, Governor Tom Vilsack signed legislation establishing Juneteenth as an official day of recognition in Iowa observed annually on the third Saturday in June. **This year’s theme for Iowa Juneteenth 2023 is “Free to Be.”**

ELIGIBILITY: The essay contest is statewide and open to “all students” *enrolled in grades 9 through 11*. We encourage essayists to enlist the guidance of a teacher or other adult when completing the essay. The essay contest serves as an inspirational vehicle for youth to strengthen appreciation for: 1) *scholarship*, 2) *cultural diversity*, and 3) *the enhancement of community relations*.

ESSAY QUESTION: “How do you preserve your freedoms in a world where post slavery treatments are still used (i.e.incarceration, immigration camps, police violence/racial violence). Thinking of your identity and Juneteenth how does this interact with freedom?”

CONTEST RULES

REQUIREMENTS: 1) Essays must be a minimum of 500 words and not exceed 700 words; 2) Essays may be typed or word-processed (double spaced); 3) Essayists must use at least 5 sources of information from books, newspapers, magazines, or websites which must be listed (cited) on a separate page and submitted with the essay; 4) Submit a color photo (portrait style – headshot), and 5) Complete the Student Information Form provided with this application which can be accessed at www.iowajuneteenth.com

TOP HONORS: Each of the three winning essayists will receive a trophy. In addition, the first-place winner will receive a **\$1,000.00 cash prize**, the second-place winner will receive a **\$500.00 cash prize**, and the third-place winner will receive a **\$250.00 cash prize**. The trophies and cash prizes are presented at an Iowa Juneteenth Observance awards ceremony in Des Moines (TBA) and winning essayists must be present to receive their trophies/cash prizes.

DEADLINE: Submit your essay, along with the Student Information Form, your photo, and your list of reading sources, by email, on or before **Friday April 14th, 2023**, to Nakia Ewing at nakiae78@gmail.com **or** send the original essay by regular mail (**postmarked by April 30th, 2022**) to:

*The Des Moines Urban Experience
Iowa Juneteenth Essay Contest
PO Box 3092, Des Moines, Iowa 50316*

Note: Students who are immediate family members or relatives of the: 1) Iowa Juneteenth Observance Planning Committee; The Urban Experience Magazine, or Drake University administration, faculty, or staff - are ineligible for the essay contest. For additional information, please contact: Nakia Ewing at nakiae78@gmail.com

Visit www.iowajuneteenth.org to complete Essay Contest Form

**Student Information Form
(Submit with Essay Materials)**

To: Iowa High School Students, Grades 9-11

From: Nakia Ewing

Please provide 'complete information' as requested below and submit with your essay materials.

STUDENT INFORMATION

Name: _____

Home Street Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code _____

Parent or Guardian Name(s)

Home Telephone Number:
(Area Code) _____ / _____

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of School: _____

School Street Address: _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Circle Grade Level (9th, 10th, or 11th grade)

School Telephone Number _____ / _____

CONTACT INFORMATION

Telephone Number: (Area Code) _____ / _____

Contact's Email Address: _____

***Remember to list (cite) at least five sources of information and submit them with your essay and photo.**